

Lieberman Delivers for Connecticut

Senator's Legislative Highlights of 2004

In 2004, Senator Joe Lieberman led the way in building bipartisan support for winning the war on terrorism and preventing future attacks on the homeland by working to strengthen America's defenses and reform our intelligence services, benefiting Connecticut's families, service members, first responders and defense workers. He also championed landmark legislation to curb global warming; launched measures to improve health care, create jobs, and strengthen outreach to the Muslim world; and defended federal funding and environmental protections for the state. In addition, Senator Lieberman won passage of legislation to locate the Coast Guard Museum in Connecticut and to protect the Highlands forest, and he advanced a bill to preserve the Long Island Sound's coastlands.

CONNECTICUT HIGHLIGHTS

Helped Win Passage of \$401 Billion Defense Authorization Bill Benefiting Connecticut - As a senior member of the Senate Armed Services Committee and Ranking Member of the Airland Subcommittee, Lieberman continued his strong support for the welfare of America's service members, the modernization of the Armed Forces, and the health of our defense industrial base. Key state-based defense companies – including Electric Boat, Sikorsky, and Pratt & Whitney – and their Connecticut workers benefit from the new and renewed defense contracts the bill authorizes, including \$2.5 billion for building one new Virginia class submarine, \$533.5 million for new Blackhawk helicopters, and \$925 million more for additional armored vehicles for our troops in Iraq.

Secured \$70 Million in Federal Funding for Key Connecticut Projects – Lieberman succeeded in securing more than \$70 million in federal funds for projects boosting the state economy, infrastructure and environment in the year-end omnibus appropriations bill. Among the Connecticut projects he won financial support for are \$10 million for the Stamford Urban Transitway; \$9 million for Adriaen's Landing in Hartford; \$7 million for the Bridgeport Intermodal Transportation Center; \$2 million for I-95 roadwork in New Haven; \$4 million for the Hartford/New Britain Busway; \$1 million to preserve the Silvio O. Conte wildlife refuge; and \$1 million for Connecticut State Police technology upgrades and procurement. (November)

Succeeded in Bringing Coast Guard Museum to Connecticut – Lieberman won passage of an amendment to ensure the new U.S. Coast Guard Museum would be fully-funded and located in New London, promising to draw tourists, jobs and attention to Southeast Connecticut. (August)

Won Passage of Highlands Conservation Act – Lieberman fought for legislation soon to become law that authorizes \$110 million in conservation projects to protect open space, wildlife, and drinking water supplies in the Highlands, a 2 million acre forest area stretching into Northwest Connecticut. (November)

Won Senate Passage of Long Island Sound Stewardship Act – Lieberman forged a bipartisan, bicoastal, bicameral consensus of Connecticut and New York lawmakers to win Senate passage of landmark legislation he authored to save the Long Island Sound's endangered natural habitat and recreational sites. The Lieberman bill uses time-tested scientific and land management techniques to protect the beaches and nature preserves along the Sound's coastline while respecting private property rights and minimizing costs to taxpayers. (October)

Helped Secure Navy Contract for Electric Boat to Build 5 Submarines - As a senior member of the Seapower Subcommittee, Lieberman consistently made the case for cutting costs to taxpayers by authorizing the Navy to enter into a contract for multiple submarines. His efforts paid off when the Navy granted Electric Boat a contract to build 5 Virginia-class submarines, an arrangement that will provide job stability to the workers at the Groton-based submarine shipyard. (January)

Won Senate Passage of Amendment Boosting Homeland Security Funding to Connecticut – Working with Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Tom Carper (D-DE), Lieberman won Senate approval of a new funding formula for homeland security grants favoring Connecticut. The amendment to the Collins-Lieberman intelligence community reform bill requires that risk and vulnerability to terrorist attack be factored into calculations for allocating homeland security grants to states, and would help deliver grant money to local first responders more efficiently and expeditiously. (October)

Persuaded Pentagon to Bring Connecticut Troops Home from Iraq – After traveling to Iraq and visiting with Connecticut troops in the 439th Quartermaster Company, Lieberman persuaded the Secretary of the Army to relieve the unit after repeated extensions of service. The Connecticut servicemen and women returned home to their families in August thanks to these efforts. (August)

Landed Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team in Connecticut – After a multi-year lobbying effort, Lieberman announced Pentagon plans to field a civil support team in Connecticut to ensure that state residents have the capability to prepare for local defense and respond effectively to a terrorist attack using a weapon of mass destruction. (March)

Held Off Cuts to Connecticut Highway Funding – As a member of the Transportation Reauthorization Bill Conference Committee, Lieberman succeeded in holding off Sunbelt state lawmakers from cutting highway funding to Connecticut and other Northeast states by extending funding at current levels. This short-term extension through May 2005 ensures that highway construction and repair contracts in Connecticut can continue while new funding levels are negotiated next year. (September)

NATIONAL SECURITY

Championed Extension of 9-11 Commission, Paving Way for Historic Report – Together with Senator John McCain (R-AZ), Lieberman thwarted Bush Administration efforts to stop the work of the 9-11 Commission he and McCain created to independently investigate the 2001 terrorist attacks. Thanks to Lieberman and McCain, the 9-11 Commission was able to complete its investigation and issue its ground-breaking report recommending reforms to prevent future terrorist attacks. Immediately afterwards, Lieberman and McCain introduced legislation codifying all of the Commission's recommendations. (March extension; July report and legislation)

Won Senate Passage of Landmark Intelligence Reform Legislation – Seizing upon the 9-11 Commission's historic report, Lieberman joined with Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) to craft and win Senate passage by a 96-2 margin of sweeping legislation to transform the intelligence community by creating a new National Intelligence Director with budget authority, and strengthening and streamlining the CIA and other U.S. intelligence agencies. (September)

Helped Secure Passage of Plan to Protect Against Biological and Chemical Attacks – Lieberman, together with Senator Orrin Hatch (R-UT), crafted BioShield, a comprehensive strategy for protecting against, and preparing for, a biological or chemical weapon attack on the American homeland. Key provisions of the bill became law, and remaining elements of the Lieberman-Hatch strategy form BioShield II, follow-on legislation to be debated in the next session. Lieberman also uncovered the Administration's failures in implementing the bioterrorism laws, leaving Americans vulnerable. (July)

Won Passage of Amendment to Improve Death Benefits for Military Personnel and Families -

Lieberman fought successfully to expand death benefits to families of U.S. soldiers killed in the war on terrorism. This was the first increase in many years, and is a measure of respect owed to those who make the ultimate sacrifice and our responsibility to their families. (June)

Introduced “Marshall Plan for the Muslim World”– Teaming up with Senator Chuck Hagel (R-NE), Lieberman crafted a bill to promote partnerships with predominately Muslim countries in the greater Middle East that would encourage political, economic, and cultural reforms by establishing a public-private trust, a development bank and a development foundation. (April)

Relaunched the “Committee on the Present Danger” – Joining with Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and like-minded national security experts and concerned citizens, Lieberman relaunched the “Committee on the Present Danger” to help fight the war of ideas and values against terrorism on the homefront. The CPD was first formed at the dawn of the Cold War to resist Communism and to advocate for increased defense spending. Today’s CPD will bring the same sort of national purpose to the war on terrorism. (July)

Championed Democracy, Religious Freedom and Human Rights – Lieberman sponsored or co-sponsored bills condemning genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan, oppression of the Bahai community in Iran, and abuses at Abu Ghraib prison. He also supported resolutions recognizing steps towards reconciliation between Serbia/Montenegro and Croatia, promoting a democracy caucus in the United Nations, and promoting human rights in the OSCE, Central Asia, Cuba, and China.

ECONOMY

Opposed Administration’s Job Outsourcing Plans – Lieberman co-sponsored a Senate resolution criticizing the President’s Council on Economic Advisors for condoning the outsourcing of American jobs overseas and calling for leadership to save and create American jobs. (February)

Issued Landmark Report on Job Outsourcing – In his on-going efforts to preserve America’s competitive edge and reduce the outsourcing of American jobs, Lieberman released a comprehensive report on the current trend in offshore job outsourcing, and a strategy for reversing this trend through assistance to displaced workers, economic innovation, math and science education, effective trade policies, and fiscal responsibility. Lieberman’s report is shaping the debate and the search for solutions to the outsourcing challenge impacting manufacturing and high-tech service workers in Connecticut and across the country. In December, Lieberman plans to release a follow-up report dealing with the “data deficit” at federal agencies that makes measuring and solving the offshore outsourcing challenge more difficult. (May)

Sought New Protections for Mutual Fund Investors – Lieberman introduced legislation to reform financial markets to protect and defend the interests of America’s mutual fund investors. The Small Investor Protection Act responds to the recent influx of individual investors into the markets and to concerns that the Securities and Exchange Commission has not acted aggressively enough to protect their interests. The Lieberman bill would create a new small investor division at the SEC, establish an office of risk assessment, and make disclosures more understandable. (June)

Proposed Bipartisan Commission to Strengthen American Competitiveness – In the face of the outsourcing challenge, Lieberman introduced legislation to create a bipartisan commission of private and public sector leaders focused on finding ways to overcome economic challenges and make American companies and workers more competitive in a global economy. Lieberman’s proposed

commission is modeled after the successful “Young Commission” that helped meet the Japanese challenge in the 1980’s. (June)

Helped Open Markets in Africa and Australia – Lieberman helped pass legislation to implement trade agreements with Australia and Morocco, and to extend the African Growth and Opportunity Act, which he co-sponsored. These agreements reduce tariff barriers and increase trading opportunities for U.S. companies, while enforcing strong labor and environmental protection provisions. (June and July)

ENVIRONMENT

Championed Legislation to Curb Global Warming – Together with Senator John McCain (R-AZ), Lieberman continued his fight for passage of the Climate Stewardship Act, a bill that would use market-forces to gradually reduce global warming gas emissions to 2000 levels and make American businesses more competitive in the booming international environmental technology market. The Bush Administration’s admission that global warming is a growing, man-made scientific phenomenon, plus the bringing into force of the Kyoto Accords after Russia’s ratification, gives fresh hope for progress on this front in the next session.

Fought Rollback of Mercury Contamination Rules – Lieberman repeatedly pressed the Bush Administration to develop more stringent, technologically feasible rules for reducing mercury levels in the environment, which are known to have harmful health effects. In letters to the President, the EPA Administrator, the EPA Inspector General and the GAO, he called for action to reduce mercury emissions from power plants and to study the harmful effects of the Administration’s proposed rollback. Lieberman also sponsored a bipartisan Senate resolution urging the Administration to work diplomatically to swiftly reduce mercury pollution worldwide.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL POLICY

Introduced Legislation to Raise Health Care Standards and Reduce Disparities for Minorities – To address the disparities in medical treatment for minorities, Lieberman forged an innovative coalition of medical practitioners and minority health advocacy groups to craft legislation that would provide incentives to hospitals and hold them accountable for raising health care treatment standards for all patients equally. (June)

Holding Administration Accountable for Medicare Premium Hikes – Lieberman demanded an explanation for the 17.4% increase in Medicare Part B Premiums in a letter to Administrator McClellan. Itemizing the program cost increases which supposedly necessitated the rate hike is the first step in seeking ways to reduce health care costs for Connecticut’s seniors. (September)

Helped Defeat Constitutional Amendment to Ban Gay Marriage Ban - Citing his belief that state governments are best able to address this issue, Lieberman cast his vote against the proposed amendment to the Constitution prohibiting same-sex marriages, helping kill the measure. (July)

CHILDREN AND EDUCATION

Proposed Study of Media Impact on Child Development – In his on-going campaign to protect children from harmful media, Lieberman introduced bi-partisan legislation to authorize a \$90 million program within the National Institute of Health to study the impact of all forms of media on children in terms of their developmental, behavioral and social development. (May)

Launched Effort to Create Teacher Professional Development Institutes Nationwide – Building on the success of cooperative efforts between Yale University and the New Haven public school system,

Lieberman introduced legislation to directly address teacher quality and retention issues by establishing 40 new teacher institutes over the next five years, guiding teachers' efforts to create and implement meaningful professional development and curricular activities.

Helping Build Community College Partnerships – Lieberman sponsored legislation along with Senators Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Max Baucus (D-MT) to improve competitiveness and enhance worker preparation by encouraging partnerships among community colleges, local businesses, and workforce investment boards.